



NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Contacts: Allison Garrett (Southeast)
727-330-0309
Jennifer Goebel (Northeast)
978-281-9175

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 14, 2015

NOAA reminds recreational boaters to slow down for right whales *Speeding violations involving large yachts on the rise*

Over the last year, NOAA charged four large recreational yachts with violations for traveling at speeds in excess of 10 knots in Right Whale Seasonal Management Areas along the Atlantic coast. The civil penalties in each case ranged from \$9,000 to \$11,500.

NOAA is reminding owners and operators of recreational yachts and other recreational vessels to slow down in these designated areas.

Vessel speed restriction regulations under the federal Right Whale Ship Strike Reduction Rule require boats 65 feet and greater in length to travel at a speed of 10 knots or less through Seasonal Management Areas and applies equally to commercial and recreational vessels. A violation of the speed reduction regulation is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$13,200 under the Endangered Species Act.

Slower speeds reduce the risk of collisions with endangered right whales, and decrease the likelihood of serious injury or death to the whale if a collision does occur. Collisions with large whales are also dangerous to passengers.

In April, right whales migrate from their calving grounds off the coasts of Florida and Georgia to feeding areas in the Gulf of Maine and north Atlantic. Several right whales have already been sighted in Massachusetts waters at this time.

The North Atlantic right whale population numbers fewer than 500 animals. Researchers have documented 17 right whale calves born this season and two first time mothers. Hitting, killing and removing even just one of these reproducing mothers from the endangered right whale population means not only her loss, but the loss of all of her future calves that are essential to the species' survival.

Over the years NOAA Fisheries has created aerial banners, issued public service announcements, sponsored the Right Whale Festival on Jacksonville Beach Florida, and taken a large inflatable right whale to numerous events in an effort to educate people about the need to conserve right whales.

As these whales journey north, NOAA Fisheries is taking the opportunity to remind mariners along the Atlantic coast that the right whales, including mom and calf pairs, are in these waters and to slow down to protect them.

Get it Right

What you should know about
RIGHT WHALES



455*

**NORTH ATLANTIC
RIGHT WHALES**
estimated
left in the **WORLD**

*As of 2010 the number of total North Atlantic right whales in existence

17 CALVES known to be born
this season



13' NEWBORN CALF

50' ADULT



**FEDERAL
SPEED LIMIT**
In seasonal
management
areas for
vessels 65'
or greater



FOR SPEEDING
through right
whale seasonal
management areas



**1,500
miles**

RIGHT WHALES
travel between
Cape Canaveral,
Florida and Bay
of Fundy, Canada



THE YEAR
RIGHT WHALES
were listed as
endangered
under the
**ENDANGERED
SPECIES ACT**

If you see a dead, injured, or
entangled right whale call
(877) WHALE-HELP or
(877) 433-8299



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

Download [Dolphin & Whale 911](#) Phone App



North Atlantic right whale with prop scars
Photo credit: EcoHealth Alliance, NOAA permit #594-1759

*****Images attached can be emailed to interested media.***

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources.

How to Learn More:

In the Southeast, to report sightings of dead, injured, or entangled whales, please contact NOAA Fisheries at 1-877-WHALE-HELP or 1-877-433-8299. You can also identify and help marine mammals in trouble simply by using your smartphone. Visit <http://1.usa.gov/1b1kqfv> to learn more.

In the Northeast (Virginia through Maine), please report right whale sightings and sightings of dead, injured or entangled marine mammals to 866-755-NOAA(6622) Approaching a right whale closer than 500 yards is a violation of federal and state law. Please report all right whale sightings to: 866-755-NOAA (6622)

Ship Strike Compliance Guide

http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/shipstrike/doc/compliance_guide.pdf

Download the Whale Alert App for iPad and iPhone:

stellwagen.noaa.gov/protect/whalealert.html

For an automatic return email listing all current U.S. Dynamic Management and Seasonal Management Areas, please send a blank message to:

nmfs.gar.rightwhale@noaa.gov

nmfs.ser.rightwhale@noaa.gov

Details and graphics of all ship strike management zones currently in effect:

www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/shipstrike

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources.

###